

## **Virginia Cave Board**

### **November 22, 2003**

The Virginia Cave Board met in a regular business session on November 22, 2003 inside Grand Caverns at Grottoes, Virginia in the room known as the Persian Palace. Chairman Ms. Barbara L. Moss called the meeting to order at 1:50 p.m.

#### **1. Roll Call**

##### **Members Present**

Dr. Kurt Buhlmann  
Dr. John Holsinger  
Ms. Karen M. Kastning  
Mr. Bill Keith  
Ms. Barbara L. Moss  
Ms. Claire Ward

##### **Members Absent**

Mr. Bob Barns  
Dr. David Culver  
Mr. Joe Davis  
Ms. Andrea Futrell  
Department of Historical Resources representative

##### **Non-members Present**

Ms. Debbie Billhimer  
Dr. Luis Espinasa  
Mr. Joey Fagan (Secretary of the Virginia Cave Board)  
Miriam Friedland  
Dr. Ernst Kasting  
Ms. Cynthia E. Miller  
Ms. Judy Molnar  
Mr. Larry Smith  
Ms. Naomi Orndorff  
Ms. T. J. Orndorff  
Mr. Wil Orndorff

#### **2. Introduction and Announcements**

Chairman, Ms. Barbara L. Moss welcomed members of the Virginia Cave Board and guests. All in attendance introduced themselves.

Ms. Cynthia Miller, the Grand Caverns Park Manager, welcomed the Virginia Cave Board and their guests to Grand Caverns Park. She noted that Grand Caverns, discovered in 1804 by Bernard Weyer, is the longest continuously operated show cave in the United States with tours for the public first offered in 1806. Ms. Miller introduced Ms. Debbie Billhimer, the Grand Caverns Operator. It was noted that in addition to members of the Virginia Cave Board and guests, Grand Caverns was also hosting a group of cavers from the National Speleological Society who are working to resurvey the caverns.

Larry Smith announced that Mr. Bob Barnes, Dr. David Culver, Mr. Joe Davis and Ms. Andrea Futrell would not be able to attend the Virginia Cave Board Meeting and send their regrets.

### **3. Minutes**

Clair Ward moved to accept the minutes of the September 13, 2003 meeting of the Virginia Cave Board as written.

Dr. John Holsinger seconded.

The minutes were unanimously accepted by the Board

### **4. Treasurers Report**

Treasurer Ms. Karen Kastning submitted the Treasurer's report to the Board.

### **Old Business**

### **5. Committee Reports**

A. Education Committee [Claire Ward, Judy Molnar, Barbara Moss, Karen Kastning]

- Discussed current contents of the Virginia Cave Board website and ideas for future improvements to the website.

B. Environmental Response Committee [John Holsinger, Bill Keith, Wil Orndorff, Barbara Moss, Kurt Buhlman, Larry Smith]

- Impacts to Interstate 81 Cave due to the eventual widening on Interstate 81 were discussed. A letter will be sent to VDOT in Bristol to express concerns about Interstate 81 Cave and to offer the assistance of the Virginia Cave Board to preserve this significant cave. The letter will emphasize three major points: resource documentation, construction of a new cave entrance, and stabilization of the existing entrance.

C. Sinkhole Protection Committee [Bill Keith, Wil Orndorff]

- Mr. Wil Orndorff reported that Ms. Andrea Futrell is continuing to keep abreast of the proposal to use mitigation funds for sinkhole protection projects under the Statewide Stream Compensation Plan. Mr. Leo Snead of VDOT is working to refine the draft version of the proposed policy.
- Mr. Bill Keith noted that the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality has jurisdiction to enforce groundwater protection issues including sinkhole dumping.

D. Sacrifice Cave Committee [Joey Fagan, Judy Molnar, Wil Orndorff]

- Mr. Joey Fagan announced the successful gating of Tawneys Cave and the plans by the owners to allow managed access to the cave by responsible cavers.

Mr. Bill Keith moved to write a letter of appreciation to Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Link, owners of Tawneys Cave, and to Mr. Mike Newsome for their efforts to keep Tawneys Cave open to responsible persons and for their work to responsibly manage and conserve this important cave resource.

Ms. Claire Ward seconded the motion.  
The motion passed unanimously.

## 6. Karst Program Report

Mr. Wil Orndorff reported on the recent activities of the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Division of Natural Heritage Karst Program.

- Wil Orndorff announced a meeting to be held in Richmond, Virginia on December 9, 2003 to discuss the construction of the American Electric Power transmission line passing through Bland County, Virginia. Topics to be covered include geophysical data, tower site locations, and right-of-way maintenance. The Cave Board was invited to send a representative to the meeting.
- Karst Program staff recently attended and presented papers at the 2003 National Cave and Karst Management Symposium in October at Gainesville, Florida.
- Work to construct a GIS-based comprehensive karst hydrological atlas of Virginia is underway.

- Work is continuing to delineate conservation site boundaries around Virginia's significant caves.

## **7. Karst Education and Project Underground Report**

Mr. Wil Orndorff submitted a reported for Ms. Carol Zokaites. Fourteen teacher workshops were presented this year in Virginia. Ms Zokaites has been active in many karst environmental education outreach activities including the National Cave and Karst Research Institute, the Children's Groundwater Festival, and the 2003 National Cave and Karst Management Symposium. She plans to represent Virginia's karst stakeholders at the upcoming Chesapeake Bay Education Summit.

## **8. Cave Board Website Update**

The Education Committee continues to work to define new content for the Virginia Cave Board Website. Specific items for inclusion on the website by the January 30 Cave Board meeting include the posting of past issues of the Cave Owners Newsletter as well as educational materials including slide presentations on caves and karst. Links to other Cave and Karst education websites, including Project Underground and the National Speleological Society Environmental Education Committee, will be included on the Virginia Cave Board Website.

## **9. Grand Cavern Update**

Larry Smith described the Upper Valley Regional Park Authority's report to the Secretary of Natural Resources and Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees on a plan for inclusion of the Grand Caverns and Natural Chimneys Regional Parks into the state park system. Ms. Cynthia Miller spoke about the Upper Valley Regional Park Authority's operational plans for the caverns. Members of the Virginia Cave Board plan to meet with Joe Maroon, the director of the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation to discuss ways in which the Virginia Cave Board can assist to affect the eventual inclusion of Grand Caverns into the state park system.

## **New Business**

## **10. Significant Cave Nomination of Lori Cori Canyon Cave**

Mr. Wil Orndorff presented details about Lori Cori Canyon Cave, located on lands owned and managed by the George Washington and Jefferson National Forest. It was noted that the cave is significant in four categories of the five possible categories under the Federal Cave Resource Protection Act including: biota, geological/mineralogical/paleontological, hydrologic, and educational/scientific.

Mr. Bill Keith moved that Lori Cori Canyon Cave be nominated for status as a significant cave under the provisions of the Federal Cave Resources Protection Act.

Ms. Karen Kastning seconded.  
Passed unanimously

**11. Study of wells for *Antrolana lira***

Mr. Wil Orndorff introduced Dr. Luis Espinasa, a biologist from Shenandoah University, who plans to sample a number of hand-dug groundwater well in the Shenandoah Valley for the purpose of locating sites where the Madison Cave Isopod (*Antrolana lira*) might exist. The work may serve to better define the range of this organism. The Board expressed support for this study.

**Public Comment Period**

- 12.** Ms. Judy Molnar reported that the Virginia Living Museum in Newport News, Virginia is seeking live specimens of Big Brown Bat and the Eastern pipistrelle for the cave exhibit that is being developed. The museum is still seeking rescued or captive grown animals for exhibit. It was recommended that the museum contact Mr. Rick Reynolds with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. It was noted that a permit might be required to keep such specimens in captivity.

**13. Times and Places for Future Meetings of the Virginia Cave Board**

- January 31 or February 7, 2004      Charlottesville, Virginia
- April 3, 2004

**Adjournment**

Ms. Karen Kastning moved the meeting to be adjourned. Dr. Kurt Buhlman seconded. Chairman Barbara Moss adjourned the meeting at approximately 3:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted by

Joey Fagan  
Virginia Cave Board Secretary